

**STRATEGY  
RESEARCH  
PROJECT**

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**75th RANGER REGIMENT:  
STRATEGIC FORCE FOR THE 21st**

**BY**

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment: Strategic Force For the 21<sup>st</sup>  
Century**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

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America's Army is focused on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Force XXI is already underway and concepts are being developed for the Army After Next. In both, Special Operation Forces (SOF) have key roles to fulfill. As part of the SOF, there is a need to define where the Army's premier infantry special operations unit, the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment, fits into the Army of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This paper examines two questions. First, what roles and missions can be derived for the Ranger Force from visions of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Army? Secondly, based upon those roles and missions what changes need to be addressed in the area of integration into Force XXI/Force Development and doctrine? The paper concludes with recommendations based upon this analysis.



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## INTRODUCTION

"In determining the armed forces the United States will require in the future, the challenge for the military strategist is to identify the near-term actions which must be taken to ensure the right military capabilities are available when needed."<sup>1</sup>

This is the dilemma all leaders in our Army face today as we transform our forces through the evolutionary process that will be brought about by Force XXI and later the Army After Next. The question to be examined here is what roles and missions will the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment have in this future Army? Additionally, in order to fulfill those roles and missions, what changes need to be addressed in the area of Ranger integration into the Force XXI/Force Development and doctrine?

We should first ask, "Are Rangers even relevant to the future force, or can the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Army accomplish missions currently assigned to Special Operations Forces (SOF), in general, and the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment, in particular?" This study does not seek to justify nor defend the relevancy of SOF nor Rangers in the future. It accepts as a basic assumption, that the requirements, concepts, and visions outlined in the National Military Strategy, Joint Vision 2010, Army Vision 2010, Quadrennial Defense Review, Report of the National Defense Panel, and July 1997 Annual Report on the Army After Next are accurate in their assessment that SOF are necessary for the future.<sup>2</sup> However, as General Schoomaker, the Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Special Operations Command, said "as new threats arise, we must

decide which of our current capabilities to retain or modify, which new ones to develop, and which old ones to discard."<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the question is not if Rangers are relevant for the future, but what unique capabilities do they provide to the SOF and what must they do to remain relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Army?

Here we will examine that question by addressing the following:

- historical and doctrinal foundation and their implications for the future.
- visions of the future to include environment, concepts, and capabilities of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century force; as well as analysis of future roles/missions for the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment.
- capability gap between Rangers today and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Ranger Force.
- recommendations in the area of Ranger Integration in Force XXI/Force Development and doctrine.<sup>4</sup>

This paper acknowledges that the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment has a key role to fulfill in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, as it has throughout our nation's history, and is well suited to be the model for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Army. However, in order to fulfill that role the Regiment must be proactive, along with the Army at large and the

Special Operations community specifically, in making changes to lead the way into the next century.

#### **HISTORICAL AND DOCTRINAL FOUNDATION**

Throughout history, Ranger units have been organized for various reasons. From Ranger companies being formed to fight the French and Indians in The New World, where the conventional European tactics proved ineffective against the unconventional tactics of an enemy in wooded or mountainous terrain, to the 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Battalion being organized in 1942 "to attack high-value targets that required units trained beyond routine infantry tactics."<sup>5</sup> It is the experience of World War II, Korea, and the post-Vietnam era that has had the most significant impact on the organization and employment of Rangers today.

**WWII Rangers:** As the requirements for Ranger units in Europe and the Pacific grew during WWII, six Ranger battalions and several Ranger-type units were activated. Missions included spearheading amphibious landings, raids against enemy prison camps, airfields, ports, and seizure of key terrain.<sup>6</sup>

During combat operations the battalions were under the operational control of Army, Corps, or Division Commanders who, in some cases, had little experience or appreciation for the capabilities or limitations of the Ranger battalions. Since these battalions were often the most highly trained units

available, commanders were often tempted to use them for missions that otherwise could be conducted by regular infantry units or on missions where they were placed at significant risk due to their limitations in organic fire support or antiarmor systems.<sup>7</sup>

For example, in January 1944, while 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> Battalions were attached to 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division they were employed to attack and seize the town of Cisterna. Poor intelligence and the lack of reconnaissance placed these units at great risk as they found themselves surrounded by heavy armored forces. The result was the complete loss of 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ranger Battalions (only 8 men escaped) and loss of half of the 4<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion.<sup>8</sup> Shortly following this action, all three battalions were deactivated. As WWII came to a close, seeing no relevancy for specialized units such as Rangers, these units were deactivated by the War Department.

The lack of any written doctrine<sup>9</sup> on the employment of Rangers during WWII, plus the fact Rangers had only been in the force structure since 1942, contributed to the lack of knowledge and experience conventional officers, commanders and staff, had in working with such units. These were contributing factors to their misuse which often resulted in catastrophe.

**Korea:** In Korea, the Rangers faced many of the same challenges as they had in WWII. Like WWII, at the outbreak of Korea, no such units existed. In Korea, companies versus

battalions, were formed and deactivated once it was decided they were no longer required. They were assigned at Army level and attached down to the infantry divisions, conducting reconnaissance, raids, ambushes, and employed as counterattack forces to restore lost positions. These companies compiled an incredible combat record. However, like WWII, with no doctrine to guide commanders on how to employ Ranger units and conventional commanders prone to use the best unit available, once again their misuse often resulted in significant losses.

**Modern Day Ranger Force:** Like WWII and Korea, the driving force for reactivation of Ranger units in 1973 would come from the very top of the Army. In late 1973, Chief of Staff General Creighton Abrams approved the reactivation of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalions.

In defining their purpose, General Abrams said,

"The Ranger Battalion is to be an elite, light, and the most proficient infantry battalion in the world.."<sup>10</sup>

Readiness would be their number one priority. It was understood that the Rangers were to be a role model for the Army and leaders trained in the Ranger battalions should return to the conventional Army to pass on their experience and expertise.

In October 1983, for the first time since WWII, Ranger Battalions would be committed into combat. As part of a Joint Task Force, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Battalions spearheaded the assault into Grenada by conducting an airborne assault to seize the Point

Salines airfield and rescue American students on the island. The success and lessons learned from the operation led to the activation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ranger Battalion and the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regimental Headquarters at Ft. Benning, Georgia in 1984. This would bring the Ranger Force, over 2200, to its highest level since WWII.

Activating a regimental headquarters enabled the Ranger Force to evolve and increase its capabilities in several areas. They were able to standardize many operational techniques, provide command and control, as well as interface with higher headquarters for planning and executing operations. Additionally, the Regimental Commander could be a central voice with the Special Operations Command and Infantry Center toward modernizing the force.

The establishment of a Ranger Regimental Headquarters also aided in the development of Ranger doctrinal literature. In the early 1980s the Ranger Battalions and Ranger Regiment produced several booklets containing 'doctrinal statements and operational concepts' in an attempt to better define their roles and missions. Finally in 1987 the Infantry Center produced Field Manual 7-85, Ranger Unit Operations, that contained much of this information. It attempted to provide doctrine that would prevent misuse of the force in the future. It still is the keystone doctrinal manual for Ranger operations.<sup>11</sup> However, since the mid-1980s the Ranger Force's role and missions has evolved and

this document has become dated. It does not adequately address the Regiment's current roles and missions, nor the unique capabilities of the Ranger Force today.

During the 1980s, while much of the focus of training and operations was on special operations, the battalions built specialized skills, such as tasks required to seize and clear airfields, on a foundation of basic infantry tasks. While part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Special Operations Command, the Ranger Regiment was still very much a part of the conventional infantry world and provided significant input to much of the infantry's training literature. Being stationed at Fort Benning, Georgia, home of the Army Infantry Center which has the responsibility to write infantry doctrine, enabled the Rangers to be the "connectivity between the Army's conventional and special operational forces."<sup>12</sup>

In the late 1980s and 1990s, Rangers would go on to conduct combat operations in Panama, Iraq, and Somalia. From company to regimental operations, they operated as part of a JTF or Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF) conducting forced-entry operations, such as airfield seizures, deep penetration raids behind enemy lines, as well as providing security and reinforcement for other SOF in the execution of raids to capture key personnel.

Lessons learned from these operations increasingly emphasized the need to improve the capability to operate over

extended distances, at night, and in an urban environment, as well as replace aging systems such as the WWII "jeeps" used for airfield seizure missions. All of this had an impact on the force structure of the Ranger Regiment.

**Force Structure:** As roles and missions changed from one of strictly an 'elite infantry battalion' to also include special operations, acquisition of new equipment and weapons became necessary. This included acquiring special operations vehicles, satellite communications equipment down to platoon level, target acquisition and designation systems, extensive night observation devices, and the 84mm Ranger Antitank Weapons System, to mention a few.

A comparison of the Ranger Battalion from 1974 to today (see appendix 3) reveals a significant change in equipment and weapons used to train and equip the force. However, while the density of equipment has increased, few changes have been made in personnel force structure.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, the Regimental headquarters in 1984 was organized with a lean warfighting structure. As the scope of responsibilities change with respect to force modernization and evolution of roles and missions, so must the structure of the Ranger Regiment. All of this has implications for the future as we look toward the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**Implications for The Future:** The major lessons to be learned from this historical experience in relation to the

implications for employment and reshaping of Rangers in the future are:

- once the Ranger Force is no longer relevant to U.S. Army requirements, it is likely to be deactivated.
- doctrine should lead the evolution of change and outline clearly defined roles, missions and what the force is expected to do.
- force structure must change, where appropriate, as the roles and missions of the force evolves.

Since 1974 the role of the Ranger Regiment has evolved into one of a large-scale (meaning company to Regiment size) special operations, direct action force. These direct action missions have been forced-entry, raids, or security/reinforcement operations in support of other SOF. In identifying the critical roles and missions for the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century we will examine what the future security environment may bring, what visions of the current military leadership are for the future, and what new capabilities are needed to best accomplish those missions.

#### **VISIONS OF THE FUTURE**

There is no shortage of 'futurists' who see major changes forthcoming in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.<sup>14</sup> While it is fairly certain none of these predictions will be one-hundred percent accurate,

most or all, espouse a common trend of dramatic change that enables one to develop a framework upon which to build.

**Environment:** "As the 21<sup>st</sup> century approaches, the United States faces a dynamic and uncertain security environment replete with both opportunities and challenges."<sup>15</sup> With the end of The Cold War the paradigm of a bipolar world quickly came to an end. Even though the threat of global war decreased, instability throughout the world has increased.

Charles W. Taylor projects four strategic trends that offer a particular challenge for SOF. They are a multipolar world, increasing probability of the use of a weapon of mass destruction (WMD), increasing urbanization, and rapid growth in technology. All of this leads one to conclude that the international environment will entail a complex global setting with new challenges facing the armed forces in order to implement the national military strategy.

A multipolar world creates an environment in which the probability of conflict increases. While relations among nation states will still dominate the environment, non-state actors such as terrorist organizations, drug cartels, international crime syndicates, and multi-national corporations will play an increasing role.<sup>16</sup> The use of asymmetrical means to attack the United States, both at home and abroad, is more likely since most state and non-state actors will attempt to avoid direct confrontation.

These are enemies who in many cases have no doctrine, cannot necessarily be 'templated' as we had done with previous threats, do not normally mass their forces, and can easily operate in the urban environment. In many cases they have access to the same technology as the United States, and have or are attempting to acquire, weapons of mass destruction.

"The security challenge having the most serious ramifications for the United States interests will come from the proliferation of WMD."<sup>17</sup> These weapons allow even the smallest non-state actor, criminal group, or nation to extend their operational or strategic reach.

"Weapons of mass destruction pose the greatest potential threat to global security. We must continue to reduce the threat posed by existing arsenals of such weaponry as well as work to stop the proliferation of advanced technologies that place these destructive capabilities in the hands of parties hostile to U.S. and global security interests. Danger exists from outlaw states opposed to regional and global security efforts and transnational actors, such as terrorists or international crime organizations, potentially employing nuclear, chemical or biological weapons against unprotected peoples and governments."<sup>18</sup>

As demonstrated by the subway attack in Tokyo, Japan in 1995 a biological weapon is a major threat in that it is extremely difficult to detect, easy to transport, arguably easy to obtain, and extremely deadly. These threats are present today and are expected to increase.

Urbanization is certainly not a new environment, but by all accounts it will take on a new dimension in the coming century.

The urban environment has offered significant challenges to militaries around the world for decades. Somalia is a good example of what a 'third world' adversary can do to even the most 'elite' forces in an urban setting. There is every reason to expect future battlefields to include both small and large cities, an environment that offers unique challenges in the area of training, weapons employment, and development or use of modern technology. Missions requiring military operations in urban terrain (MOUT) will present an increasing risk to the U.S. military, particularly as adversaries acquire WMD. MOUT has been recognized by the U.S. Army as the "most likely, complex and resource intensive battlefield of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century."<sup>19</sup>

Technological advancements will fundamentally change the way people around the world live and militaries wage war in the next century, particularly in the area of information technology.<sup>20</sup> It is this future environment that today's leaders must consider when developing visions of a force for the next century.

**Current Visions:** At every level, from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs to Service Chiefs, vision statements have been published to capture the key concepts necessary to provide a framework for building a future force. The Joint and Army literature envision future forces that have the capability to be doctrinally flexible, strategically mobile, modular for joint and multinational operations, versatile and capable of precision engagement.

The future concepts and considerations identified in these visions that are particularly relevant for the Ranger Force include: high-quality people, innovative leadership, flexible organization, enhanced materiel, as well as a power projection force that is fully joint and highly mobile.<sup>21</sup> The future operational concept for the Army extends the battle space with fewer forces and thus places a greater emphasis on strategically mobile forces, such as Rangers, that are highly flexible, and are able to strike targets at greater distances with more lethality and greater survivability than today.

**Roles and Missions:** In examining the Joint Staff's and Army's visions concepts and capabilities, clearly SOF units can be the "point of the spear" in leading the Army into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. In particular the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment, as the connectivity between the conventional Army and Special Operations, is well suited to be the model force. In addition to already having a highly selected group of soldiers and leaders, Rangers are currently organized and trained to provide the regional CINCs with unique capabilities to operate across the conflict spectrum and are the force of choice for rapidly deployable forced-entry operations.<sup>22</sup>

The roles and missions of the Rangers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century will be similar in many respects to today's. While the Army's contingency forces and Marines will undoubtedly increase their capability to execute forced-entry operations, the mission for

Rangers to also execute these missions, such as airfield seizures, will remain a requirement in the future. The rapid strategic force projection capability of the Rangers, as part of a Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF), will continue to make them the 'force of choice' for many forced-entry scenarios. Also, Special Operations will continue to need a large-size special operations direct action force. Other SOF units can not provide the capability that a Ranger company/battalion/regiment can with respect to executing direct action missions. Rangers will remain primarily a direct action combat force but will become more of a '**global strike force**' in the next century as our force projection capabilities increase.

It is not foreseen that the primary role of Rangers will significantly change in the future, but the uncertain security environment of the future requires that Rangers remain adaptable. While direct action missions against fixed strategic or operational targets, such as command and control or logistics sites, will not be irrelevant, the greater challenges will be in other areas. In particular, operations in the area of **counterproliferation of weapons of mass destruction (CPWMD)**, **counterterrorism (CT)**, and **noncombatant evacuation operations (NEO)** are primary mission areas for the future. A common denominator in all these operations are that they will most likely be conducted in an urban environment.

"The development of effective capabilities for preventing and managing the consequences of terrorist use of nuclear, biological or chemical (NBC) materials or weapons is of the highest priority . . . there is no higher priority than preventing the acquisition of such materials/weapons or removing this capability from terrorist groups."<sup>23</sup>

It may very well be necessary to conduct operations against adversaries who are violating international treaties with respect to the counterproliferation of WMD. Putting a force on the ground to collect evidence of these violations, recover WMD, or destroy materials used to produce them is a capability which will be required. A force, such as the Ranger Regiment, with sufficient combat power to repel or defeat an adversary's security and reaction forces, will be required to be part of this Joint effort. This mission area will require much more extensive research and development of new capabilities.

Also, as terrorist/paramilitary groups increasingly threaten U.S. interests, the Rangers, operating from company to regimental level, will be well suited to operate as part of a Joint Force to eliminate their training bases and safe havens around the world. Additionally, as 'hot spots' flare up, due to increasing instability of a multipolar world, noncombatant evacuation operations (NEO) could well be the top mission for the next Century. What could distinguish 21<sup>st</sup> Century NEO from those of the last decade is an increasing requirement to conduct them in a hostile or nonpermissive environment. While there are certainly other conventional forces, such as the Marines and other airborne

units, that can conduct NEO under nonpermissive environments, Rangers would be part of the Joint Force and the "organization of choice" due to their unique capabilities not otherwise resident in the conventional Army. This unique capability includes a force that habitually trains and operates in the joint arena, has strategic communications that enables them to command and control their forces not available to the conventional commander, and routinely executes politically sensitive missions. Rangers are highly trained under the most demanding conditions, enabling them to obtain unparalleled proficiency to operate at night, on urban terrain with noncombatants, where very restrictive rules of engagement apply, as well as having the capability of insertion by land, sea, or air. The Ranger Regiment also has the opportunity to train throughout the year, maintaining a constant high state of readiness, with at least one battalion and a Regimental command and control element ready to deploy, on no-notice, world-wide in eighteen hours and one Ranger company in nine hours.<sup>24</sup>

Finally, the major strength and unique capability the Ranger Regiment brings to the fight, not otherwise available in the conventional Army, is the individual Ranger and leader. The Army at large provides the Rangers its very best and the Ranger Regiment's assessment and selection process ensures that the ranks of the regiment are filled with top quality recruits, as

well as experienced, senior leaders who have all performed their jobs successfully in the conventional Army.

These capabilities make Rangers the ideal unit to execute or support these missions today and in the future. However, to best meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century new capabilities are required to enhance the unit's ability to accomplish these new missions.

**New Capabilities:** As in the past, the capability to execute future missions must evolve and technology will play a key role in that evolution. Specifically, new capabilities required for the Rangers are **greater flexibility; improved command and control systems; increased capability to operate in an urban environment, and greater lethality and survivability for the individual soldier.** The capability gap existing between where we are now and where we need to go must be bridged quickly.

#### **CAPABILITY GAP**

For purposes here, "the capability gap" refers to the perceived disparity between what the ability of a unit is to accomplish a given task or mission today as compared to that required in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The threat, along with the emerging missions, with which the Ranger Force must contend, serves to illustrate some areas where capability gaps exist currently, or will exist in the future.

**Command and Control/Flexibility:** Due to the nature of the future threat, gathering intelligence and the ability to transmit information will be even more critical than in the past. As always, detailed intelligence for special operations is an absolute necessity. The force dealing with WMD and terrorist targets, in particular, must be highly flexible and remain capable of commanding and controlling its forces in order to react to any changes in the disposition of enemy forces or weapon systems. With respect to Ranger operations, the capability to transmit timely intelligence, video and digital information, or the commander's intent down to the lowest level during strategic deployments, at remote staging bases, or to the force on the ground will be a critical requirement in order to obtain the highest degree of flexibility. The capability to produce video/digital links between individual soldiers and all commanders, therefore making it possible to adjust the plan and execute 'limited rehearsals' enroute to the objective area would be invaluable. At present, our ability to exercise command and control and 'see the battlefield' is limited, particularly in an urban environment.

**Urban Environment:** The most likely future operational environment for the Ranger Force is in cities, particularly when dealing with weapons of mass destruction (WMD), terrorist, or noncombatant evacuation operations. An existing vulnerability, as demonstrated by operations in Somalia, is the lack of an

armored transport vehicle that can move vulnerable personnel, such as wounded Rangers, noncombatants, and equipment, such as WMD material, through a high risk area. The future will also place an increasing demand for Rangers to breach all types of obstacles as well as know the detailed threat within buildings. Currently, in order to breach obstacles, such as doors or walls, a soldier must physically place a demolition charge on the obstacle. We are also lacking sensors which enable the force to detect personnel in structures or underground tunnels, such as city sewer systems. Technological solutions that can provide the capability for stand-off breaching and 'thru-wall' sensors are vital.

**Lethality and Survivability:** Increasing the lethality of the Ranger Force while maintaining its rapid strategic deployability is a must. In particular, antiarmor and indirect fire support weapons that increase the force's ability to deal with a 21<sup>st</sup> Century threat, that may have access to state-of-the-art weapons systems, are crucial. At the same time, Rangers must have the capability to neutralize a threat employing nonlethal means, particularly during a NEO or WMD situation. Today the Ranger Force has a limited capability in the employment of nonlethal weapons or munitions. Also, a WMD threat highlights the need to improve the capability to better operate in a nuclear, biological, or chemical (NBC) environment.

Increased survivability in the future means improving "friend or foe" identification, improving body armor, and developing or perfecting the use of robotics equipment for tasks such as conducting 'high risk' breach operations.

In all these areas, force modernization will drive the closure of "the capability gap" and Force XXI programs will pave the road.

#### **FORCE XXI**

Striving to make the visions and concepts for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century force a reality, the Army has embarked on several major undertakings. These are Force XXI and Army After Next (AAN). Force XXI being those initiatives that will bring about a Strategic Army of the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century with a projection date of 2010. Several of these initiatives will be key in enabling the Rangers to acquire new capabilities for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and to develop "Ranger Force 2010." They are Force XXI experiments, such as Contingency/Joint Advanced Warfighting Experiments (AWE), several Advanced Concept Technology Demonstrations (ACTD), and the "Land Warrior" program.

**Land Warrior:** The "Land Warrior" program brings together the most modern technology to build the 'ultimate' soldier. It provides the individual soldier with the most modern night vision, information, and communication technology. The "Land Warrior" soldier is outfitted with the most protective and

lightest body armor. The system gives the leader complete awareness of where his forces are, their status, and the ability to almost instantaneously redirect their efforts. For example, a leader with the mission to seize a building and evacuate noncombatants during a nonpermissive NEO could receive up-to-date intelligence just minutes prior to execution that indicates increased risk. The Ranger "Land Warrior" leader could immediately transmit this information to all his Rangers via digital or video heads-up display map showing exactly where in the building the noncombatants and enemy forces are located. This allows the Ranger Force to immediately adjust its plan, thus significantly increasing the command and control as well as flexibility of the unit.

**Advanced Concept Technology Demonstrations (ACTDs):** The Military Operations on Urban Terrain (MOUT) and Rapid Force Projection Integration (RFPI) ACTDs could also produce equipment and weapons that will enhance Ranger capabilities. Systems that provide digital/video links to and between strategic forces while enroute; improved nonlethal weapons and munitions; new stand-off explosive breaching capability, and thru-wall sensors, are some of the initiatives of these two programs.

The concept for future integration and testing of these programs is a capstone Contingency/Joint Advanced Warfighting Experiment (AWE). Units outfitted with the "Land Warrior" system and equipment from the ACTDs would be part of this AWE to

evaluate concepts for the Joint Force based upon forced-entry operations on the future battlefield.

**Contingency/Joint Advanced Warfighting Experiment:** The Infantry Dismounted Battle Lab, as part of Force XXI, is developing concepts for a Contingency/Joint AWE. Currently projected to occur as early as Fiscal Year 2000, it establishes the pathway to modernization and digitization of the Contingency/Light forces.<sup>25</sup>

At present, the Ranger Regiment is not envisioned to be part of this AWE, nor are they fully integrated into these Force XXI initiatives. Certainly, lessons learned from all these programs will shape the future capabilities of not only the conventional Army, but SOF, thereby providing equipment and weapons that will close "the capability gap" between our forces today and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Within the last year the Ranger Regiment has developed a 'Ranger 2010' concept that addresses many of the issues discussed here. In particular, the concept calls for a redesign of the Regiment to fix many of the personnel shortages that have evolved over the years. Additionally, within the last several months the Regiment has obtained approval of several proposals, to include the addition of a civilian Regimental Force Modernization program manager. I fully endorse these initiatives and offer the

**following recommendations** to enhance the Ranger's capabilities to execute future missions.

**Ranger Integration in Force XXI/Force Development:** Without a doubt, the top priority to ensure that the Ranger Regiment remains relevant for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century must be in increasing the Ranger Regiment's direct participation in Force XXI initiatives. As the Army's premier 'Land Warriors,' the Regiment must take an "active role" in developing and testing new initiatives for the future. Their participation in these initiatives will provide the Ranger Regiment with new capabilities to execute future operations. These increased capabilities, I believe, to a great degree will evolve out of the ongoing Force XXI initiatives, in the near term, and Army After Next (AAN) programs in the future. The capability to strategically deploy a 'Global Strike Force' to conduct a direct action raid in an urban environment against a WMD or terrorist target will be greatly enhanced. Some unique Ranger requirements, such as a deployable armored vehicle, can be procured through other special operations programs.

Through the initiative of the Regimental staff much is being done to develop Ranger Force 2010, but more needs to be accomplished. In particular, the Regiment must take full advantage of the development of technology resulting from such programs as the MOUT and RFPI ACTD. Second, the Regiment must stay abreast of "Land Warrior" development and push to be the first unit in the Army to be fielded with the system. Third, the

Ranger Regiment should be an integral part of the future Contingency/Joint Advanced Warfighting Experiment (AWE) currently scheduled perhaps as early as FY00. As previously pointed out, this AWE will evaluate most of the Force XXI initiatives in a Joint Task Force configuration using a 21<sup>st</sup> Century scenario. The Ranger Regiment should be leading the way validating Ranger Force 2010 along with other Army XXI units.

How can this be better accomplished? There is no simple answer and the Ranger Regiment is making tremendous headway with current staff officers taking on this challenge as additional duties. Due to the complexity of the tasks, and the long-term nature of the programs, as well as multiple coordinating agencies, it will be extremely difficult for the Ranger Regiment staff, as currently structured, to completely resolve this problem without some restructuring. The addition of a civilian Force Modernization Manager is a partial answer. But the issues here go beyond his scope and call for a Ranger Force Development and Integration office that pulls together all aspects of Ranger Force 2010. This office would have to interface with the USAIC and USASOC in planning and coordinating force development and modernization, along with the Regiment's integration into Force XXI and AAN initiatives. Meanwhile, the Regimental S-5, as the action agency in this area must continue to be proactive in Force XXI and AAN. This becomes essential in maintaining General

Sullivan's Charter that the Rangers serve as the "connectivity between the Army's conventional and special operational forces."

Having the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment lead the way as the model for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Army and bridge the gap between Force XXI and AAN will greatly enhance that transition process. The Ranger Force is versatile enough to handle this challenge.

**Updated Doctrine:** Regardless of whether doctrine is to be the "engine of change," as MG (Ret) Garrison suggests, or not, it deserves some attention. A major task for the development of a future force is the development of doctrine to delineate "our future capabilities and operational concepts" and "describe what we want that force to be and do."<sup>26</sup> First, FM 7-85, Ranger Unit Operations, as acknowledged by doctrine writers at the USAIC,<sup>27</sup> needs to be updated to reflect the current roles and missions of the Force as well as the unique capabilities Rangers offer the Joint Force Commander and, finally, what that force is expected to be and do in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. While this is the responsibility of the USAIC, it is currently classified as "backlogged" and not likely to be updated in the near future. Several solutions could be pursued. One would be to solicit field grade officers, with the appropriate background and experience, at the Command and General Staff School (CGSC) to review and provide a proposed revision as part of their requirements. Another solution, one currently being used within

the Army and other services, is to contract a civilian organization to update the manual. The recommendation here is to first pursue the former. This review and revision could be worked in conjunction with the Ranger Regiment and once reviewed by the Regimental Commander submitted to the USAIC for the formal review and approval process. Also, these changes need to be incorporated into FM 100-25, Doctrine For Army Special Operations Forces.

#### **CONCLUSION**

In the past, there has been considerable concern whether Rangers would be properly employed. As history has demonstrated, this concern has been for good reason. However, if the last decade is any indicator, Army leaders learned from these lessons and used this strategic force when and where their unique capabilities were required. While extensive restructuring of the Special Operations Command and expertise on staffs at Echelons Above Corps (EAC) has greatly enhanced the ability to properly employ all Special Operations Forces, without a doubt the temptation and opportunities to misuse Rangers will occur in the future. Doctrine that clearly outlines the roles and missions of Rangers should assist in preventing such misuse.

The implications of not having the foresight to critically examine "which of our current capabilities to retain or modify,

which new ones to develop, and which old ones to discard"<sup>28</sup> may relegate the Rangers of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century to the same fate as those after WWII and Korea.

The Rangers and the Army in the past have greatly benefited from special operations modernization programs and will undoubtedly continue to do so in the future. However, SOF, in general, and Rangers, in particular, can ill afford to not be an integral part of the Army's Force XXI programs. Continuous examination of the changing environment, along with the National Military Strategy, will be essential to determining the direction the force takes in the future. The Ranger Regiment has been through evolutionary changes in the past and is well prepared to do the same in the future in order to be ready for the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. (**word count: 5873**)



## **APPENDIX 1**

### **THE WICKAM CHARTER**

The Ranger Regiment will draw its members from the entire Army--after service in the Regiment--return these men to the line units of the Army with the Ranger philosophy and standards.

Rangers will lead the way in developing tactics, training techniques, and doctrine for the Army's Light Infantry formations.

The Ranger Regiment will be deeply involved in the development of Ranger Doctrine.

The Regiment will experiment with new equipment to include off-the-shelf items and share the results with the Light Infantry Community.

GEN John Wickam  
Chief of Staff of the Army  
Guidance to Commander, 75th Rangers  
10 may 1984

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **THE SULLIVAN CHARTER**

The 75th Ranger Regiment sets the standard for light infantry throughout the world. The hallmark of the Regiment is, and shall remain, the discipline and espirit of its soldiers. It should be readily apparent to any observer, friend or foe, that this is an awesome force composed of skilled, and dedicated soldiers who can do things with their hands and weapons better than anyone else. The Rangers serve as the connectivity between the Army's conventional and special operational forces.

The Regiment provides the National Command Authority with a potent and responsive strike force continuously ready for worldwide deployment. The Regiment must remain capable of fighting anytime, anywhere, against any enemy, and WINNING.

As the standard bearer for the Army, the Regiment will recruit from every sector of the active force. When a Ranger is reassigned at the completion of his tour, he will imbue his new unit with the Regiment's dauntless spirit and high standards.

The Army expects the Regiment to lead the way within the infantry community in modernizing Ranger doctrine, tactics, techniques, and equipment to meet the challenges of the future.

The Army is unswervingly committed to the support of the Regiment and its unique mission.

Gordon R. Sullivan  
General, United States Army  
Chief of Staff

**APPENDIX 3**  
**FORCE STRUCTURE COMPARISON**

<b>EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>CHANGE FROM 1974 TO 1997</b>
NIGHT VISION DEVICES	+2500 Systems
TARGET ACQUISITION SYS	+1200 Systems
COMPUTER SYSTEMS	+350 Systems
<b>WEAPONS</b>	
SMALL ARMS	M16A1 TO M4A1
CREW SERVED	M60MG TO M240B MG  90MM RR TO 84MM CG  ADDED: .50 CAL MG, MK 19, JAVELIN MAW



## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Douglas C. Lovelace, Jr., The Evolution in Military Affairs: Shaping The Future U.S. Armed Forces (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 16 June 1997), V.

<sup>2</sup>GEN John M. Shalikashvili, National Military Strategy (Washington, D.C.: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1997); GEN John M. Shalikashvili, Joint Vision 2010 (Washington: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1996); GEN Dennis J. Reimer, Army Vision 2010 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 1996); Secretary William S. Cohen, Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, May 1997); GEN Dennis J. Reimer, Knowledge and Speed: The Annual Report on The Army After Next Project (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, July 1997); Philip A. Odeen, Transforming Defense - National Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Report of the National Defense Panel (Arlington, VA: National Defense Panel, December 1997).

<sup>3</sup>GEN Peter J. Schoomaker, "Special Operations Forces: The Way Ahead," Statement provided to U.S. Special Operations Command (December 1997), 6.

<sup>4</sup>This framework was 'loosely' based upon ideas from Christopher Lamb, "Perspectives on Emerging SOF Roles and Missions," Special Warfare, Vol. 8, No. 3, 2-12 (July 1995).

<sup>5</sup>U.S. Special Operations Command, Special Operations in Peace and War, USSOCOM PUB 1 (Tampa, FL: U.S. Special Operations Command, January 1996), 2-5.

<sup>6</sup>Ranger type units in WWII included the 1<sup>st</sup> Special Service Force (Served in Italy), and 5307<sup>th</sup> Composite Unit (Prov.) (Served in the Pacific Theater) also known as 'Merrill's Marauders' after their commander BG Frank D. Merrill. There was also the 29<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion, which was formed out of the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, that saw service from April to October 1943 in Europe. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalions saw service in the Sicilian, Italian, and European Theaters, while the 6<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion served in the Pacific Theater. See David W. Hogan, Jr., Raiders or Elite Infantry?: The Changing Role of the U.S. Army Rangers from Dieppe to Grenada (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992) 36-51; Robert W. Black, Rangers in World War II (New York, NY: Ballantine Books, 1992); and Robert W. Black, Rangers in Korea (New York, NY: Ballantine Books, 1989).

<sup>7</sup>Hogan, 25-26, 44-45, 57-60.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 58-60.

<sup>9</sup>For a review and definition of U.S. Army doctrine see John L. Romjue, American Army Doctrine For The Post-Cold War (Fort Monroe, VA: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1997). For purposes in this paper, 'Doctrine' refers to a Department of the Army officially approved statement, based upon experience, of the proper mission and method of a military force.

<sup>10</sup>U.S. Department of the Army, 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment Information Booklet (Fort Benning, GA: 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment, 1992), 15. The complete quote from which this is taken is commonly referred to as the Abrams Charter. Since 1974, several Chiefs of Staff of the Army have issued similar statements reaffirming their commitment to the Ranger Regiment (See Appendix 1 and 2).

<sup>11</sup>The two best current sources for Ranger doctrine are U.S. Department of the Army, Ranger Unit Operations, FM 7-85 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 1987) and U.S. Department of the Army, Doctrine For Army Special Operations Forces, FM 100-25 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 12 December 1991). While TRADOC drew up a doctrinal statement in 1974 it was very broad, stating that a Ranger battalion "is normally employed against targets and under conditions which require the unique capabilities of the unit." In 1983 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Battalion produced Rangers Lead The Way: An Overview, that contained a doctrinal statement, operational concept, and employment considerations. Not until 1987 when FM 7-85 was published was there an Army publication that sufficiently explained Ranger doctrine. In 1991, Army Special Operations Command published FM 100-25 as the doctrinal foundation for subordinate Army SOF. However, it defers to FM 7-85 as the keystone document for Ranger operations. Hogan, 201-205; U.S. Department of the Army, Rangers Lead The Way: An Overview. (Hunter Army Airfield, GA: 1<sup>st</sup> Ranger Battalion, 1983), 12-15.

<sup>12</sup>GEN Gordon R. Sullivan, Sullivan Charter (1992). See Appendix 2.

<sup>13</sup>A telephonic interview with the United States Army Infantry Center Ranger MTOE manager, Mr. Sutcliff, revealed that, besides the addition of a couple medics, Ranger Battalions have virtually remained unchanged in personnel since 1974.

<sup>14</sup>Several include Charles W. Taylor, "Projecting the Changing Conflict Setting," in Roles and Missions of SOF in The Aftermath of The Cold War, ed. Richard H. Shultz, Jr., Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., and W. Bradley Stock, 45-58 (Tampa, FL: U.S.

Special Operations Command, 1995), John L. Petersen, The Road to 2015 (Corte Madera, CA: Waite Group Press, 1994), and Brian Nichiporuk and Carl H. Builder, Information Technologies and the Future of Land Warfare (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Arroyo Center, 1995), and Douglas C. Lovelace, The Evolution in Military Affairs: Shaping the Future U.S. Armed Forces (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 16 June 1997).

<sup>15</sup>Cohen, 3; Shalikashvili, National Military Strategy, 1.

<sup>16</sup>Rod Pascall, LIC 2010-Special Operations and Unconventional Warfare in The Next Century (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's (US), Inc, 1990), 5, 45-46, 100; Shalikashvili, Joint Vision 2010, 1, 11, 18; GEN Henry H. Shelton, SOF VISION 2020 (Tampa, FL: United States Special Operations Command, 1996), 5-6.

<sup>17</sup>U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Force XXI Operations: A Concept for the Evolution of Full-Dimensional Operations for the Strategic Army of the Early Twenty-first Century TRADOC PAMPHLET 525-5 (Fort Monore, VA: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1 August 1994), 2-7.

<sup>18</sup>National Security Strategy For a New Century (Washington, D.C.: The White House, May 1997), 6.

<sup>19</sup>Carol J. Fitzgerald, "Military Operations In Urban Terrain: Advanced Concept Technology Demonstration," briefing, Carlisle Barracks, PA, U.S. Army War College, 29 Oct 1997, slides of briefing cited with permission; LTC Randy Sullivan, meeting with author 5 February 1998, Fort Benning, GA.

<sup>20</sup>Shelton, 21; Shalikashvili, 13; LTG Peter J. Schoomaker, Army Special Operations forces Vision 2010 (Ft. Bragg, NC: U.S. Army Special Operations Command, 7 April 1997), 8; Builder and Hichiporuk.

<sup>21</sup>Shelton, 4-5, 9.

<sup>22</sup>U.S. Department of the Army, Operational Concept For The 21<sup>st</sup> Century, 1-4.

<sup>23</sup>FEMA Director James L. Witt, "Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) - 39 Abstract," memorandum for Associate Directors, Washington, D.C., 8 January 1996.

<sup>24</sup>U.S. Department of the Army, 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment, Operational Concept for The Ranger Force (Fort Benning, GA: 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment, 14 November 1997).

<sup>25</sup>Mr. Warren Morimoto, meeting with author, 5 February 1998, Fort Benning, GA; Mr. Warren Morimoto, "Contingency Force AWE," briefing slides provided to author, 11 December 1997.

<sup>26</sup>MG William F. Garrison, "The USSOCOM View of Doctrine as an Engine of Change," in Roles and Missions of SOF in The Aftermath of The Cold War, ed. Richard H. Shultz, Jr., Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr. and W. Bradley Stock (Tampa, FL: U.S. Special Operations Command, 1995), 174.

<sup>27</sup>Major Randy Holden, meeting with author 6 February 1998, Fort Benning, GA.

<sup>28</sup>Schoomaker, "Special Operations Forces: The Way Ahead," 6.

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